Rs. 13,212 crore in 2003-04. Public Sector Banks have been advised to increase their disbursement to small and marginal farmers to 40% of their disbursements under SACP by March 2007. Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks operate predominantly in rural areas and a large portion of their credit is extended to small and marginal farmers.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Reserve Bank of India has issued instructions to Banks for providing loans upto Rs. 50,000/- without insisting on collateral and margins.

(e) Yes, Sir. The advisory Committee on Flow of Credit to Agriculture and Related Activities from the Banking System (Vyas Committee) has recommended setting up of an Agri-Risk Fund with equal contribution from Central and State Governments and participating Banks.

(f) As it will be difficult to administer Agri-Risk fund in the country, where size of land holding is very small and land records are incomplete, it may be a better option to subsidise the agriculture insurance premium rather than providing budgetary support to Agri-Risk Fund.

Implementation of Varsha Bima Yojana

2857. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question No. 226 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 9th August, 2005 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Varsha Bima Yojana is being implemented only in a few States;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Scheme is proposed to be extended to the whole of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Varsha Bima-2005 was implemented in 130 India Meteorological Department (IMD) rain gauge station areas spread over 10 States *viz.* Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh. The

designing of a rainfall insurance product requires historical crop yield and rainfall data. The National Insurance Academy collected rainfall data for 300 rain gauge stations. However, being a new product, it was decided to implement Varsha Bima Yojana in 130 IMD rain gauge stations only.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The all India coverage of the scheme is not feasible due to the unavailability of historical rainfall data and unsuitability of the scheme for some areas.

Collection of Education Cess

2858. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total collection from the 2 per cent Education Cess on all Central taxes during 2004-05 and how much of it had gone into the fund for elementary education;

(b) how much of it was utilized on various education related schemes and financing schemes aimed at universal access to education; and

(c) how far the public education expenditure has reached the target of 6 per cent of GDP as contemplated under the Common Minimum Programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Sixth Pay Commission

2859. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH:
SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Action Council of Government Employees put forward any request to revise their pay and allowances by appointing Sixth Pay Commission; and